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REMARKS

Claims 1-43 are pending in this application, and were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 over Staples. Claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 10, 11, 13-21, and 22-30 are currently amended. Claims 3, 6 and 8 are now cancelled. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The present invention distinguishes Staples by reciting that communications are redirected in a multiple access network between a first access network used by the watching party and a second, different access network used by the device associated with the selected address. As defined on page 7, lines 7-16, a "multiple access network" includes two or more different types of communications networks, each of which may be associated with different types of terminals. For example, a multiple access network may include a wireless phone network, a wired phone network, and a broadband data network. Hence, the presently claimed invention could forward an instant message originating from a data network to a user's wireless phone after determining that the watched party is not able to access the data network via a personal computer at the time the instant message is sent. In contrast, Staples merely transits communications within a single type of communications network, e.g., from one fax machine to another fax machine, or from one land line to another land line. Since different access networks correspond to different types of devices, the presently claimed invention further distinguishes Staples by reciting that the communication is received by the watched party on a different type of device than the watching party uses to transmit the communication. In other words, Staples does not facilitate "personal mobility," which, as defined at page 2, lines 28-29, is the ability for an individual to move from one type of device to another while preserving access to a common set of services.

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The distinguishing features described above are recited in claims 1, 13 and 22. For example, claim 1 recites "prompting redirection of communications between the first type of device associated with the first access network and used by the watching party to the a second type of device associated with the second access network and used by the watched party by forwarding the selected contact address to the watching party to enable the watching party to contact the watched party at the selected contact address in response to the watched party contact rules." Similarly, claim 13 recites "said processor prompts redirection of communications between a first access network used by the watching party and a second, different access network used by the device associated with the selected contact address such that the watched party receives the communications on a different type of device than the watching party employs to transmit the communications," and claim 22 recites "wherein said processing means prompts redirection of communications between a first access network used by the watching party and a second, different access network used by the device associated with the selected address such that the watched party receives the communications on a different type of device than the watching party employs to transmit the communications." Claims 2-12, 14-21 and 23-43 are dependent claims which further distinguish the invention, and which are allowable for the same reasons discussed above with regard to their respective independent claims. Withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1-43 is therefore requested.

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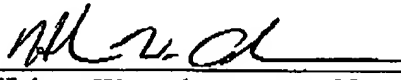
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Applicants have made a diligent effort to place the claims in condition for allowance. However, should there remain unresolved issues that require action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Holmes W. Anderson, Attorney for Applicants, at 978-264-4001 (X305) so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

For these reasons, and in view of the above amendments, this application is now considered to be in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Date

  
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